

## Book reviews

**Boundary and Space. An Introduction to the Work of D W Winnicott.** By M Davis and D Wallbridge. (Pp. 196 incl. index; £9.00 hardback.) Karnac: London. 1981.

Winnicott's standing is such that many paediatricians and child psychiatrists who are not familiar with his writings feel they should be, but they have either not had the time to study his work, or have tried but failed to comprehend it. Winnicott has a reputation for being difficult to understand and I asked myself as I read this book whether I could recommend it to the 'average' paediatrician who is already swamped with reading matter.

The background to this volume lies in the formation of the Winnicott Publication Committee founded in 1975 to make his work better known to students. The committee appointed the authors to produce a general introduction to, and appraisal of his work. The book is divided into three parts. Part one discusses Winnicott's personal qualities and beliefs, and the evolution of his theory of emotional development. Part two, which forms the bulk of the book, describes and discusses in depth his theory of emotional development. Part three briefly considers the implications of his theory.

This is undoubtedly a comprehensive and useful introduction to Winnicott's ideas; it is well written, attractively produced, easy to read, and liberally sprinkled with quotations from his writings. It would make a valuable addition to the library of any serious student of his work. But what about the busy paediatrician who would like to know more about his ideas than 'good-enough mothering' and 'transitional objects'? If he is prepared to work hard and tackle this book—as is a medical student confronted with a basic text of physiology—then certainly he should read it; it is fairly short and not too expensive. But if the time, energy, or motivation is not there then this is the wrong book because it is not for the casual reader. Busy practitioners may do better to read selected chapters from *The child, the family, and the outside world* or *Collected papers: through paediatrics to psychoanalysis*. Although I didn't see him in action Winnicott's clinical skills always

interested me more than his theoretical ideas. I am not saying that his theory of child development is unappealing—far from it—but rather that as a clinician he was simply superb. Only a few would have had his ability to make such significant and therapeutic contact with children. In this respect, there can be no more worthwhile book to read than his *Therapeutic consultations in child psychiatry*.

BRYAN LASK

**Clinical Paediatric Endocrinology.** Edited by C G D Brook. (Pp. 684 incl. index; illustrated+tables. £48.00 hardback.) Blackwell: Oxford. 1981.

This is a new multi-author textbook of paediatric endocrinology under English editorship. It contains 35 chapters by 40 contributors, most of them from the UK and Europe, but with the USA and Australia also represented. The boundaries of endocrinology in paediatrics are wide and difficult to define but a comprehensive approach is taken here. This is reflected in the grouping of chapters into 8 major sections under the headings I Fetal growth and endocrinology: sexual differentiation; II Growth; III Puberty and problems of the reproductive system; IV The hypothalamopituitary axis; V The thyroid gland; VI The adrenal gland; VII Calcium metabolism; VIII Gastrointestinal hormones and carbohydrate metabolism. Because so many topics are covered individual chapters are necessarily short and many include several pages of references. The general standard of these reviews is high and each serves as a good introduction to the relevant original sources. The emphasis is perhaps rather less clinical and more physiological than the title of the book implies but such an approach enhances understanding of clinical problems and the practical advice given is generally sound.

It is to the editor's credit that the unevenness inevitable in a work with so diverse a company of contributing authors is not more evident. There are however,

apparent problems of balance between contributions. Some topics of major clinical importance (such as diabetes mellitus, hypothyroidism, and congenital adrenal hyperplasia) are given short shrift whereas others (such as the dysmorphic syndromes which are marginal to endocrinology and well described elsewhere) are allowed to occupy disproportionate space.

There is no doubt that this book represents a major contribution to the literature on paediatric endocrinology; despite the price clinicians with a special interest in this field will wish to own it and all paediatricians and endocrinologists should have access to it.

N D BARNES

**MacKeith's Infant Feeding and Feeding Difficulties**, sixth edition. By C B S Wood and J A Walker-Smith. (Pp. 334 incl. index; illustrated+tables. £8.00 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1981.

The first edition of this book, by Philip Evans and the late Ronald MacKeith, was published in 1951; thirty years later the sixth edition is the first to appear without the guiding hand of either. Christopher Wood and John Walker-Smith are to be congratulated on maintaining the qualities which made its five predecessors so popular, and much of the original graceful, lively prose remains. The chapter headings of recent editions have been retained, but various parts have been expanded or updated, and important new references added. These include sections on the various cows' milk preparations, on gastroenteritis, cows' milk protein intolerance, protein-energy deficiency syndromes, and metabolic disorders. A few pages on feeding problems in a multiracial society are a helpful addition. The appendices, which have always been one of the most useful aspects of the book, have been revised and one on the Codex alimentarius has been added. This last consists of a brief explanatory